

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Laws of Minnesota 2010 Final Report

Date: December 23, 2013

Program or Project Title: Protect Key Industrial Forest Land Tracts in Central Minnesota, Phase 1

Funds Recommended: \$594,000

Manager's Name: Josh Stevenson

Title:

Organization: Cass County

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Legislative Citation: ML 2010, Ch. 361, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(b)

Appropriation Language: \$594,000 in fiscal year 2011 is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Cass County to acquire lands that assist with gaining access for restoration and enhancement purposes to existing public land tracts. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required accomplishment plan.

County Locations: Cass

Ecological Planning Regions:

- Northern Forest

Activity Type:

- Protect in Fee

Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Forest

Abstract:

Project has protected forest wildlife habitat in central Minnesota through fee title acquisition of key forest tracts. Title of lands acquired are held by Cass County in Fee.

Activity Detail

Design and Scope of Work:

Central MN, especially are in Cass County from Brainerd/Baxter to Walker, has and will continue to see some of the fastest human population growth in MN. This growth will lead to increased demands. Use of this area, its natural resources and related public land base that need to support this growth. Development of these private industrial parcels has resulted in the loss of Jack Pine barrens in the landscape of southern Cass County. Industrial forest tracts held by Potlatch are currently being sold to private developers. These lands often provide access to existing public lands for resource management, are inholding in otherwise unfragmented landscapes, create continuous wildlife corridors, and protect larger blocks of land especially useful for stand level management of habitat.

Key industrial forest tracts (ie inholdings in large public land tracts, management access issues) are being considered or currently being offered for sale by a large industrial forest owner (Potlatch Corp) in this area. Depressed market conditions and a willingness by this industrial forest owner to sell at this time is an opportunity that should be addressed now since it is narrow and may close at any time. The strategy is to acquire land that hold corridors. The land acquired has existing forest access roads that have been used for management access for years. The sale of these lands to private individuals has already resulted in the loss of access for resource management on public lands. The acquired lands were not being pursued for convenience of management.

The identified parcels play a key role in future management plans of the Hack Pine Barrens including the role of fire as a management tool. The loss of these parcels to private ownership will result in lost access. Management of adjacent public lands will be limited to frozen ground conditions. This will eliminate management tools such as site preparation of Jack Pine plantings and aerial seeding as well as prescribed burns for Jack Pine regeneration. This type of management requires year round access. The acquired lands provide year round management access to over 1,235 acres of existing public lands in the Jack Pine barrens landscape. The acquisition of these lands will provide permanent year round access for forest management as well as protecting habitat in and around the surrounding areas.

The Cass County Forest Resource Management Plan directs the County to acquire land of this nature whenever

possible to protect our management access. The Cass County Comprehensive plan requires no new loss of acres of public land and local unit of government input on all purchases and land sales. This project meets the requirements of both plans and will require stakeholders input as part of the project. The local units of government will the private industrial lands to be purchased will be contacted for input before any acquisitions are made. Recent purchases of this nature have been supported by both the County and local units of government. The Cass County Board of Commissioners has a strong history of supporting land sales and acquisitions that have local unit of government support.

Planning

MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation

Plans Addressed:

- Cass County Forest Resource Management Plan

LSOHC Statewide Priorities:

- Address conservation opportunities that will be lost if not immediately acted on
- Address wildlife species of greatest conservation need, Minnesota County Biological Survey data, and rare, threatened and endangered species inventories in land and water decisions, as well as permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Allow public access. This comes into play when all other things about the request are approximately equal
- Are able to leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation
- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and others while doing this important work
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities

LSOHC Northern Forest Section Priorities:

- Protect shoreland and restore or enhance critical habitat on wild rice lakes, shallow lakes, cold water lakes, streams and rivers, and spawning areas
- Protect forestland through acquisition or easement to prevent parcelization and fragmentation and to provide the ability to access and manage landlocked public properties

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds:

- No Relationships Listed

Sustainability and Maintenance:

Maintenance

The Cass County Land Department manages all County Administered lands under our Forest Resource Management Plan. These lands are not eligible for PILT payments. MN Statute 477A.11 defines lands that are eligible as being held by the state in fee or tax forfeited. The acquired lands for this project are held in fee by Cass County and therefore are not eligible for PILT Payments. There will be no ongoing cost to the State of MN for the acquisition of these lands.

Sustainability

This management plan requires that operations are maintained from revenue generated from timber sales. Cass County has a long history of covering our operation costs with timber revenue. The lands acquired are managed under this same plan.

Outcomes

Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation
- Landlocked public properties have increased access for land managers

Budget Spreadsheet

Total Amount: \$594,000

Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	Request	Spent	Cash Leverage (anticipated)	Cash Leverage (received)	Leverage Source	Total (original)	Total (final)
Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$37,000	\$37,000	Cass County	\$37,000	\$37,000
Contracts	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$594,000	\$557,000	\$0	\$0		\$594,000	\$557,000
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Professional Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	Cass County	\$0	\$2,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
DNR IDP	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Total	\$594,000	\$557,000	\$37,000	\$39,000		\$631,000	\$596,000

Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	Spent	Cash Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
county personnel	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$37,000	Cass County	\$37,000
Total	0.00	0.00	\$0	\$37,000		\$37,000

Output Tables

Table 1. Acres by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands (original)	Wetlands (final)	Prairies (original)	Prairies (final)	Forest (original)	Forest (final)	Habitats (original)	Habitats (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	400	400	0	0	400	400
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	400	400	0	0	400	400

Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type

Type	Wetlands (original)	Wetlands (final)	Prairies (original)	Prairies (final)	Forest (original)	Forest (final)	Habitats (original)	Habitats (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$594,000	\$557,000	\$0	\$0	\$594,000	\$557,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$594,000	\$557,000	\$0	\$0	\$594,000	\$557,000

Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban (original)	Metro Urban (final)	Forest Prairie (original)	Forest Prairie (final)	SE Forest (original)	SE Forest (final)	Prairie (original)	Prairie (final)	N Forest (original)	N Forest (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400	400	400
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400	400	400

Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section

Type	Metro Urban (original)	Metro Urban (final)	Forest Prairie (original)	Forest Prairie (final)	SE Forest (original)	SE Forest (final)	Prairie (original)	Prairie (final)	N Forest (original)	N Forest (final)	Total (original)	Total (final)
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$594,000	\$557,000	\$594,000	\$557,000
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$594,000	\$557,000	\$594,000	\$557,000

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles (original)

0 miles

Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles (final)

1 miles

Parcel List

Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

No parcels with an activity type restore or enhance.

Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Cass

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Becker Township Tract	13432221	80	\$123,000	No	Full	Full
Daggett Brook Tract	14027234	160	\$220,000	No	Full	Full
Farnaham Lake Tract	13532218	120	\$137,000	No	Full	Full
Hiram Township Tract	14031227	40	\$77,000	No	Full	Full

Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

No parcels with an activity type protect and has buildings.

Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.

Completed Parcel: Becker Twnship Tract

# of Total Acres:	80
County:	Cass
Township:	134
Range:	32
Direction:	2
Section:	21
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	0
# of Acres: Forest:	80
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	0
Amount of Shoreline:	
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	NA No -
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Certificate of Survey needed before signs are erected.
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	Cass County
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Joshua Stevenson
Annual Reporting Address:	PO Box 25
Annual Reporting City:	Backus
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	56435
Annual Reporting Email:	josh.stevenson@co.cass.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	2189477501
Purchase Date:	June 16, 2011
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$123,000
Appraised Value:	\$123,000
Professional Service Costs:	\$655
Assessed Value:	\$111,300
Total Project Cost:	\$123,655
Fees Received:	\$0
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	
Property Managed By:	Local Unit of Government -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	Cass County

Completed Parcel: Daggett Brook Tract

# of Total Acres:	160
County:	Cass
Township:	140
Range:	27
Direction:	2
Section:	34
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	0
# of Acres: Forest:	160
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	0
Amount of Shoreline:	
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	NA
	No -
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Certificate of Survey needed before signs can be erected.
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	Cass County
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Joshua Stevenson
Annual Reporting Address:	PO Box 25
Annual Reporting City:	Backus
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	56435
Annual Reporting Email:	josh.stevenson@co.cass.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	2189477501
Purchase Date:	June 16, 2011
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$220,000
Appraised Value:	\$220,000
Professional Service Costs:	\$655
Assessed Value:	\$186,900
Total Project Cost:	\$220,655
Fees Received:	\$0
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	
Property Managed By:	Local Unit of Government -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	Cass County

Completed Parcel: Farnham Lake Tract

# of Total Acres:	120
County:	Cass
Township:	135
Range:	32
Direction:	2
Section:	18
# of Acres: Wetlands/Upland:	0
# of Acres: Forest:	120
# of Acres: Prairie/Grassland:	0
Amount of Shoreline:	0.56 (Linear Feet)
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable):	Farnham Lake
Has there been signage erected at the site:	Yes
Annual Reporting Organization Name:	Cass County
Annual Reporting Manager Name:	Joshua Stevenson
Annual Reporting Address:	PO Box 25
Annual Reporting City:	Backus
Annual Reporting State:	MN
Annual Reporting Zip:	56435
Annual Reporting Email:	josh.stevenson@co.cass.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone:	2189477501
Purchase Date:	June 17, 2011
Acquisition Title:	
Purchase Price:	\$137,000
Appraised Value:	\$137,000
Professional Service Costs:	\$655
Assessed Value:	\$100,000
Total Project Cost:	\$137,655
Fees Received:	\$0
Donations:	\$0
Related Parties:	
Property Managed By:	Local Unit of Government -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager:	Cass County

Completed Parcel: Hiram Township Tract

of Total Acres: 40
County: Cass
Township: 140
Range: 31
Direction: 2
Section: 27
of Acres: Wetlands/Upland: 0
of Acres: Forest: 40
of Acres: Prairie/Grassland: 0
Amount of Shoreline:
Name of Adjacent Body of Water (if applicable): NA
No -

Has there been signage erected at the site: When certificate of survey needs have been identified, all signs will be erected.

Annual Reporting Organization Name: Cass Country
Annual Reporting Manager Name: Joshua Stevenson
Annual Reporting Address: PO Box 25
Annual Reporting City: Backus
Annual Reporting State: MN
Annual Reporting Zip: 56435
Annual Reporting Email: josh.stevenson@co.cass.mn.us
Annual Reporting Phone: 2189477501
Purchase Date: June 08, 2011
Acquisition Title:
Purchase Price: \$77,000
Appraised Value: \$77,000
Professional Service Costs: \$655
Assessed Value: \$81,300
Total Project Cost: \$77,655
Fees Received: \$0
Donations: \$0
Related Parties:
Property Managed By: Local Unit of Government -
Name of the unit area or location government unit or land manager: Cass County